THE OBSERVER.

NEW-YORK:

SUNDAY MORNING, FEBRUARY 26, 1809.

DIFFERENCE AND AGREEMENT;

OR,

SUNDAY MORNING.

(*Dr. Aikin.*)

IT was Sunday morning; all the bells were ringing for church, and the streets were filled with people from all directions.

Here numbers of well dressed persons, and a long train of charity children, were thronging in at the wide doors of a large handsome church; there a small number, almost equally gay in dress, were entering an elegant meeting-house; up an alley a Roman Catholic congregation were turning into their retired chapel, every one crossing himself with a finger dipped in holy water as he went in. The opposite side of the street was covered with a train of Quakers, distinguished by their plain and neat attire, and the sedateness of their aspect, who walked without ceremony, into a room as plain as themselves, and took their seats, the men on one side, and the women on the other in silence. A spacious building was filled with an overflowing crowd of Methodists, most of them meanly habited, but decent and serious in their demeanour; while a small society of Baptists in the neighbourhood, quietly occupied their humble place of assembly.

Presently the different services began; the churches resounded with the solemn organ, and with the indistinct murmurs of a large body of people following the minister in responsive prayers. From the meetings were heard the slow psalm, and the single voice of the leader of their devotions. The Roman Catholic chapel was enlivened by strains of music, the tinkling of a small bell, and a perpetual change of service and ceremonial. A profound silence and unvarying look and posture, announced the self-recollection of the Quakers.

Mr. Ambrose led his son, Edwin, round all these different assemblies. Edwin viewed every thing with great attention, and was often impatient to inquire of his father the meaning of what he saw; but Mr. Ambrose would not suffer him to disturb any of the congregations, even by a single whisper. When they had gone through the whole, Edwin found a great number of questions to put to his father, who explained every thing to him in the best manner he could. At length says Edwin, but why cannot all these people agree to go to the

same place, and worship God in the same way.

And why should they agree? (replied his father.) Do not you see that people differ in a hundred other things? Do they all dress alike, and all eat and drink alike, and keep the same hours, and use the same diversions?

Aye, but these are things in which they have a *right* to do as they please!

And they have a right to worship God as they please. It is their own business, and concerns none but themselves.

But has not God ordered particular ways of worshipping him?

He has directed the *mind* and *spirit* with which he is to be worshipped, but not the particular form and manner; that is left for every one to choose according as suits his temper and opinion. All these people like their own way best, and why should they leave it to follow the choice of another.

Religion is one of the things in which mankind were made to *differ*.

The several congregations now began to be dismissed, and the street was again overspread with persons of all the different sects going promiscuously to their respective homes. It chanced that a poor man fell down in an apoplexy, and lay for dead. His wife and children stood round him, crying and lamenting in the bitterest distress. The beholders immediately flocked round, and with looks and expressions of the warmest compassion, gave their help. A Churchman raised the man from the ground by lifting him under the arms, while a Dissenter held his head, and wiped his face with his handkerchief; a Roman Catholic lady took out her smelling-bottle, and assiduously applied it to his nose; a Methodist ran for a doctor; a Quaker supported and comforted the woman; and a Baptist took care of the children. Edwin and his father were among the spectators.

There, said Mr. Ambrose, is a thing in which mankind were made to *agree*.

In faith and hope the world will disagree,
But all mankind's concern is charity.
POPE.

ON THE BEING OF A GOD.

The fool saith in his heart there is no God.

The existence of a God is a truth so clear and obvious, that it hardly needs an argument to demonstrate it. No reasonable man ever seriously doubted it; and it is only the fool, as it is justly observed in the text, who saith in his *heart* there is no God. There have been indeed men of some celebrity for their talents, who have presumed to call in question his existence; but there is good reason to believe that the doubts of these persons were more affected than real, and that their disbelief instead of originating from the *heart*, arose from a vanity of appearing singular in their opinions, and from a desire of making an ostentatious, but impious display of their ingenuity.

The existence of a Supreme Being may be demonstrated in two ways, either by arguments *a Priori*, or *a Posteriori*. The former mode, although highly ingenious, and sufficiently conclusive, is not so satisfactory; nor does it carry such irresistible convictions to the mind as the latter. The meanest insect that crawls on the earth, the feather of a fowl, or the leaf of a plant, more forcibly proves the existence of a first intelligent cause than all the subtle and metaphysical reasonings of the philosophers. The argument *a Posteriori*, or the reasonings in proof of the being of a God, drawn from a survey of the works of creation, are founded on this plain and undeniable principle, that wherever design is exhibited there necessarily exits intelligence. Design and intelligence are convertible terms. If we see a telescope, or any other instrument,

which displays design in the arrangement of its parts, we immediately ascribe its formation to a maker, or to an intelligent cause. To suppose that it formed itself, would involve this egregious absurdity, that it acted before it had existence; and to ascribe it to mere chance would be equally absurd, because chance never acts with design. A thing we say displays design, when all its parts are so combined and adjusted as to produce a certain effect. The mechanism of a watch, for instance, is adapted to measure time, the eye is formed to discern objects, and the ear to distinguish sounds. Each of these things have a peculiar structure which fits them to discharge certain duties; nor is it possible by any act or contrivance to make them answer any other purpose than the one for which they were severally designed. It would be the height of folly in the expertest artist to attempt to make the eye perform the functions of the ear, or the ear those of the eye.

In contemplating the works of creation in the most cursory and superficial manner, the existence of a God is every where apparent. From the greatest down to the minutest objects in nature there is displayed the nicest economy, the profoundest wisdom, and the most exalted power. If we raise our eyes to the firmament, we see it adorned with myriads of stars, which beautify the night, and by their collected rays contribute to preserve us from total darkness. We see the sun each day rising with majestic splendour, giving light to this globe, and imparting its genial heat, without which animal life, nor vegetation could not for one moment exist. Around the sun we behold the planets revolve with a regularity the most surprising, an order the most admirable, and a velocity the most inconceivable. If we limit the range of our contemplation to the earth we inhabit, our attention is every where arrested by a display of supreme wisdom. It appears to be exactly fitted for our nature, and to be provided with every thing suitable to our condition. The various productions with which it abounds, the infinite diversity of its inhabitants, the regular rotation of day and night, and the grateful vicissitude of the seasons evince the hand of a Divine Architect. How admirably do we see the animals formed for the different elements in which they exist! The birds have an organization which suits them for the air, the fishes for the water, and the beasts for the land. Volumes, in short, would not suffice to set forth the order and wisdom exhibited in the animated and inanimate creation. Our first intellects can only comprehend but a small part of the general system of the Universe. But it is not necessary to recur to distant objects to prove the being of a God; let the gloomy sceptic who doubts it only turn his eyes on himself, let him view the wonderful structure and machinery of his own frame, and he will soon witness enough to be convinced that he is the work of Omnipotent intelligence.

It is of little consequence however to believe in the existence of a God, unless we entertain a just conception of his nature. Man, if left to the mere light of reason, would possess but a very obscure and imperfect knowledge of his attributes. Without a revelation he would have been involved in the thickest darkness, and debased by the grossest superstition. To know the Creator we must contemplate his works, and above all, we must diligently search the sacred scriptures, where he has vouchsafed to disclose himself. There we find him represented as a kind parent, and a merciful Judge; the bountiful patron of virtue, and the stern avenger of vice. J. C.

ADDRESS TO BEAUX AND BELLES.

Want and incurable disease (fell pair!)
On hopeless multitudes remorseless seize
At once, and make a refu. e of the grave.
How groaning hospitals eject their dead!
What numbers groan for sad admission there!
What numbers once in fortune's lap, high-fed,
Solicit the cold hand of charity.
To shock us more, solicit it in vain!
Ye silken sons of pleasure! since in pains
You rue more modish vis ts, visit here,
And breathe from your debauch: give, and reduce
Surfeit's dominion o'er you: but so great
Your impudence, you blush at what is right.

Thus said YOUNG, and it never could have been more applicable than now. There is always distress enough in the world, but I never knew so much in New-York as at this time.

If an American, living in London, should now be told the streets of New-York were full of beggars, he would not believe it; he would say, we have more than we know what to do with; our stores are bursting with fulness, and it is a base calumny.

I wish I could persuade a few of the "Silken sons of pleasure," to take a walk, (I beg their pardons, a ride I meant) a little way out of the third or fourth wards, and treat themselves to a sight of real misery. They are often seen to sigh, and sometimes to drop a tear at the recital of a tale of woe, or by reading of some scene of distress; but after it is over, or the book laid down, ask them to go and see the original; out comes a watch, and your answer would be----why, Sir, I, I, would like very much to go, but I, I, have a particular engagement a--a--a--at Mrs. A's---- Oh that's true; a--wont you come and take a hand at whist this evening with us? . . . . . A case in point. . . . . Not long since a poor cartman supported a wife and nine children, with the assistance of an old horse that he had imbibed a great affection for:------his horse was too old to work; he was too poor to buy another------what could he do-------it cut him to the heart . . . . . One day his old companion stumbled----the load of wood he was carrying pitch'd forward and kill'd him . . . . . He stood for a moment blind with grief and distraction; but when he looked in the face of his dead old friend, it seem'd to say to him, you have kill'd me with hard work ------his heart was bursting------he lean'd his head against the cart-wheel, and was reliev'd by a flood of tears . . . . . the crowd gathered round---every one said, Oh dear me------every body was very sorry---every body was very, very sorry indeed. A Frenchman that had seen the whole without saying a word, now pulled off his hat, put three dollars in it, and carried it round, saying "Jentlemen, I sorry tree dollar, how much you sorry?" Do you want to know how much he collected------not one cent---the mob dispersed instantly.

This is the dark side of the picture; there are some who do go and gladden the hearts of the wretched. I met some ladies a few days since, who had just returned from a little excursion of this kind; they told me of several scenes of wretchedness they had witnessed. In one place they went to, there was a sick woman with four children and her aged mother; her husband she had not heard of for nearly a year; the children barefoot, and all scarcely covered; they had lived three days on half a dollar, which a gentleman had given them, 12 cents of which had been spent for wood to keep them warm.

But the story which struck me most, was that of a family, the father of which was in a consumption, and sitting by the stove, more like a spectre than a human being; when they asked him if he thought he was getting better than he had been, he smiled; and said, no, thank God, he felt worse and worse every day, and that he hoped in a week or two at farthest, he would be finished.

"Want and incurable disease,
. . . . . fell pair,
That make a refuge of the grave!"

I feel the reader waits for me to draw some conclusion. To say something to make an elegant finish to the circumstances I have been relating. Why! what can I say? If I have given a true picture of what you may see by going to look at it, (for these poor creatures cannot bring their hovels, with all their nakedness to your clubs, for you to look at) if it be true I say, and it is true by . . . . . but why should I take my maker's name in vain, and I fear every thing I can say will be in vain; but if it be true that you can, with the price of a play-ticket, or by staying away from one of our screeching concerts, prevent a virtuous human being from sinking into vice, (for human beings will not starve while they can steal) but I beg my own pardon for saying so much upon the subject, little as it is, for you will throw the paper down, swear it is a dull subject---badly written, and try to stifle the subject by talking of the *petit paphos*, or some other of your elegant amusements; but more of that anon.

MORALIST.

Does the soul always think?

Few questions in abstract metaphysics are accompanied with greater difficulties than the one which I now propose to discuss. It involves the consideration of the most difficult and subtle topics which have been agitated in this science.

Consciousness, and the arguments drawn from consciousness, form the only fixed principles of metaphysical science; and, therefore, where this is wanting, we roam at large in the most mazy and unsubstantial regions of imagination.

In the present question, this guide forsakes us; for many operations of the soul are performed by a species of habit, without our being in any manner conscious of them. Hence, therefore, we must discuss this topic on grounds purely abstract.

What then is the soul? and what is thought? The soul is that assemblage of active powers, of whose existence we are conscious, and which we denominate *mind;* and thought is nothing more than the operation of those faculties. Hence then this question is resolved into this simple proposition, *Are the powers of the mind always active?* My opinion inclines strongly in favour of the affirmative; for, in the first place, if it is admitted that the soul is immortal, it naturally follows that it must be always active; for if it is not always active, its powers must be subject to suspension; and that which may be suspended in its operations for a *time*, may be suspended *eternally;* because the same latent principle which subjects it to a partial, will certainly subject it to a total and permanent suspension. Is then the soul immortal? Upon this topic so much has been already written by learned and ingenious men, that is needless for me, at this time, to say any thing upon it; suffice it to say, that as the whole controversy hinges upon the preliminary question---"Whether the soul is matter or spirit?" If this ground of difference be removed, the question will no longer exist. Now then if for this purpose we even admit the *materiality* of the soul, I will contend that it does by no means follow that the soul is *mortal.* For who can say that matter, pure elementary matter (if I may be allowed the expression) is not capable of eternal duration? Does any thing of which we are sensible, authorize a different conclusion? Do we not see it constantly assuming new forms, and yet never annihilated? *Its form*, but not its essence, changes.---- Therefore we have no ground to attach the possibility of eternal extinction to matter. We must then admit that the soul is immortal, and being immortal, it must be eternally active, admitting of no partial or temporary suspension of its powers.

Again, to place this question on

a new ground. The soul is a collection of faculties. There is no substratum to which these faculties are particularly attached; hence, therefore, those who assert that these faculties, at any season, lay dormant, assert that at that period the soul does not exist; for what is the soul but these active powers? Those therefore, who contend that the soul sometimes ceases to think, contend for this strange absurdity, that we sometimes exist without souls. In this view also then, the soul is always active.

It is, however, observed by some, that if the position for which I contend is true, it will argue a want of wisdom in the Deity; for, say they, all things are formed to answer some wise end; but when the body slumbers, the activity of the mind is *useless*, it can answer no wise purpose. This, it must be confessed, is treading on unknown ground; for who can form an idea of supreme wisdom? Dreams, which we consider as some wild wayward operation of the soul, form a part of the economy of human nature; and who will say, that even here, the Deity does not display his inscrutable wisdom.---Observations, therefore, drawn from this dark region, can have no weight in determining questions like the present; they may mislead, they cannot instruct.

From these arguments, therefore, thus briefly considered, we may rationally conclude that it is more probable the soul always thinks, than that her powers are liable to temporary suspensions; and this, in my mind, is the greatest degree of *certainty* of which pure abstract speculation admits.

X.

NEWS OF THE WEEK;

Extracted chiefly from "The Mercantile Advertiser."

By the latest accounts from Washington, it appears that the embargo laws and the non-intercourse bill are still under discussion: the result is yet uncertain; though it is generally believed that the embargo will be taken off, and a non-intercourse law, as far as respects Great Britain, France, and their dependencies, be enacted.

It is asserted, on the authority of the French bulletins, that the Spanish armies under generals Blake, Palafox, Castanos, and Romana, have been completely defeated with great loss. It is also said that the divisions of the English army, under generals Hope and Moore, now in Spain, have not been able to form a junction, and that they were retreating towards the coast.

On the 28th Nov. the French head-quarters are dated at Aranda.

The Additional Duty Bill, which imposes for one year an increase of 50 per cent, passed the House on the 16th inst. and is to go into immediate operation, after it has received the President's signature.

Commodore Decatur is to take the command of the frigate United States, and Capt Hull to take that of the Chesapeak.

On the 1st inst. a detachment of about 150 United States troops commanded by Capt. Peters sailed from Pittsburgh for N. Orleans.

A letter has been received in town, from Antigua, dated the 26th of January, which states, that an expedition had just arrived at Barbadoes from England, consisting of 3 Major Generals and 1400 troops, to be commanded by Gen. Beckwith, destined against Martinique.

The French national brig Papil-

lon, capt Dela Guetico, out 27 days from Martinique, put into this port yesterday in distress, having carried away both her masts. She mounts 15 thirty two cannonades and has 97 men. It is reported that she contradicts the account of the capture of that Island by the British, and that she had captured and burnt a British vessel, off this port---as our boat was not permitted to board her, we cannot answer for the correctness of these reports.

From an arrival yesterday in 12 days from Havanna, we learn that a ship had arrived there in 30 days from Liverpool; the accounts brought by her were kept a profound secret, and all the papers she brought were taken by government: still, it was asserted that the news she brought was very unfavourable; that the armies of the Juntas had been entirely routed and in a great measure destroyed, and that the French army had arrived, with little opposition, before Madrid--- There are no dates given.

A Gentleman who came passenin the ship True-American, in 21 days from Port au Prince, informs us, that 8 or 10 days before he sailed a very bloody battle had taken place at Cape Nichola-Mole, between the armies of Petion and Christophe in which the latter was defeated with great loss, at least 1000 being left dead upon the field.

Our informant further states, that the City of Santo Domingo, was in a very tranquil state, and had not been attacked by the Spaniards or British, and that General Ferrand was still living.

We further learn that an American brig, laden with provisions, had recently been captured by one of Christophe's cruizers, and had been condemned.

The Governor and Council of New Hampshire have appointed Thursday the 13th day of April next, to be observed as a day of public humiliation, fasting and prayer, throughout that state.

We understand that letters were received in town yesterday from Havanna, dated the 4th instant, via Baltimore, which state, that great rejoicings had taken place in the Havanna, in consequence of important news received from Spain

Washington, Feb. 21.

In the House of Representatives the non-intercourse bill was under discussion till a late hour this evening. The question before the house was, *shall the 12th section be stricken out.* This section is that which provides for a repeal of the embargo on the 4th of March, and was decided, after a long debate, *not to strike out the section.* Yeas 47, nays 75.

This day the Senate passed the non-intercourse bill. Yeas 21, nays 12.

ORIGINAL POETRY

A ransom for beginning and then abandoning a Lady's portrait.

When first I saw fair Anna's face
Mov'd by its beauty, and its grace,
I strove its ornaments to trace:
'Twas bootless pain.

The rich carnation there that glows,
The dewy freshness of the rose,
And lily on the brook that grows,
Mimic in vain.

Her braided tresses to pourtray,
Or locks that o'er her forehead stray,
Kissing her cheeks in wanton play,
What art can teach;

Her teeth than orient pearl more white,
Her coral lips, that in despite
Of their own laws, to love invite.
What skill can reach?

To shew her eyes' seraphic hue!
Would art and nature both outdo;
The vaulted heaven's azure blue
Would be too faint.

But chiefly in her dimpled smiles
Love sports in all his wicked wiles,
And many a thoughtless heart beguiles
With dear delight.

So I, as on her charms I gaz'd,
And felt my senses all amaz'd,
E're yet my brain was fully craz'd
I took to flight.

S.

The Suicide's Soliloquy.

Alas! the troubled dream of life is o'er,
And hope's fantastic visions charm no more!
No more shall fancy paint the flowery way,
Where transient joys in borrow'd lustre play.
No more affliction's snaky lash shall make
The brain to madden and the heart to ache,
Ceas'd are the awful tremors of the frame
And dissolution's dwindled to a name.
O Lethe! to thy dark oblivious stream
I haste, and leave this weary idle dream.

A. A.

This paper will be published at T. Powers's book-store, No. 116, Broad-Way, every Sunday morning, from 7 o'clock till 10; where subscribers will please to leave their names and directions. The price is 2 dollars per annum, to be paid quarterly in advance;--or six cents per number. A letter-box will be left at the above place to receive communications for the editor.

MARRIED,

On Saturday evening last by the rev. Mr. Hobart, Mr. John L. Fonda, merchant of Poughkeepsie, to Miss Eliza Brooks, of this city.

On Sunday evening last, by the rev. Dr. Miller, capt. Robert Dawson to Miss Isabella Morton.

On Sunday evening last, Mr. Thos. M'Coot to Miss Maria Collet of this city.

On Tuesday evening last Mr. Chs. Graham to Miss Sarah Matilda Hunter.

On Wednesday evening last Mr. John Gordon to Miss Margaret Jones.

BILL OF MORTALITY.

Elenor Wooley, Peter Lozier, Thomas Gilbert's child, Samuel Dunn's child, Isaac Van Hook, John Scanit, Catharine Apple, Henry Crissy, Solomon Gardener, Maria Rodeman, Dorothy Cuttenhall, York Wright, Ann Frelon, Isabecca Kennedy, Prudence Perkins, Clara Young, Mary Crane, Michael Nestell, Thomas Vaughan, William Hogan, Moses Jacobs, Patrick M'Kinley, Joseph P. Wadman, Bryan Connelly, James Berry, John Sharp, Elenor Higgins, Rosanna Dormer, Susan Stout, child of Federick Menles, Hannah Thompson, Mr. Staner's child, George Christie, Mr. Waldham's child, Philip Van Winkle, Samuel Woodruff Mary Hardie, Elizabeth Chine, Jamesl Brown William Muir, child of James Caldwel, George Strube, Eliza Lovell, Stephen Hustice.